

Penile Hair Patterns of Whites and Negroes

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ALTHOUGH abdominal and pubic hair patterns of men have been studied by several investigators (Risak,¹ Dupertuis et al.,² Prosser,³ McGregor,⁴ and Setty^{5, 6, 7, 8}), no study of penile hair patterns or any aspect of penile hair was found in the available literature. Therefore, the present report has the distinction of being the first on penile hair.

SUBJECTS AND METHOD

The subjects were 320 white and 320 American Negro males taken at random from the patient population of St. Elizabeths Hospital, Washington, D.C.

In order to have privacy, the ward examination room was used. Each subject lay in the supine position upon the examination table under an electric lamp. The abdomen and external genitals were exposed. While the subject was thus arranged, the penis was observed from its dorsal, lateral, and ventral aspects for hair distribution, first by the author and then immediately by the attending assistant. The pattern of distribution of the hair concluded by the two observers was drawn within a mimeographed outline of a lateral view of the penis. And for possible correlation the abdominal hair pattern was noted and recorded by name just above the outline.

For subjects with dark skin, a reading glass was used in addition to the naked eye in scanning the surface of the penis.

Finally, just below the outline of the penis, the age and the race of the subject were recorded.

DESCRIPTIONS OF PENILE HAIR PATTERNS

On the basis of the area or combinations of areas of the penis furnished with hair, four penile hair patterns were recognized. They are simply designated as follows: Class 1 for one involved area; Class 2 for two; Class 3 for three; and Class 4 for four. They are more completely designated

by naming the one or more areas involved.

The penile hair patterns are shown in lateral view in Fig. 1. And they are briefly described as follows:

1. *Class 1 or basal.* The hair is limited to the base of the penis, and it forms a more or less continuous band that encircles the penis. On the ventral side and lower part of the lateral sides, the hair is continuous with the scrotal hair; on the dorsal side and upper part of the lateral sides, the pubic hair.

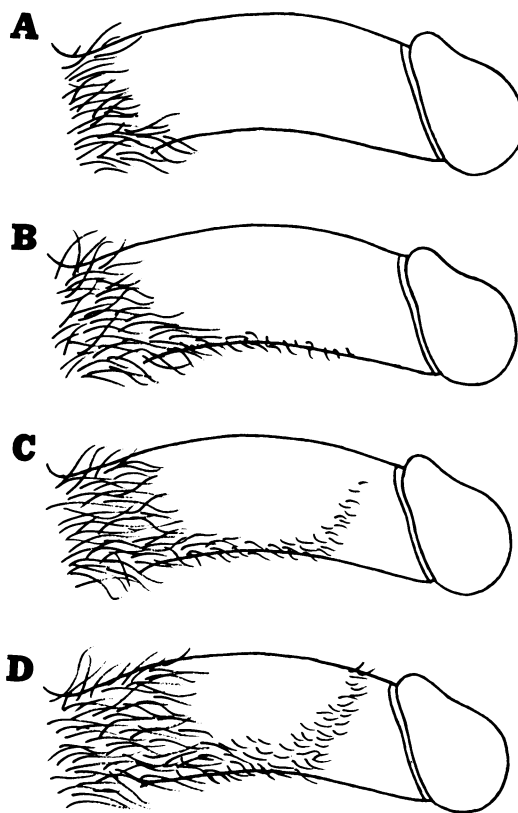


Fig. 1. Penile hair patterns. A, Class 1 or basal. B, Class 2 or ventro-basal. C, Class 3 or latero-ventro-basal. D, Class 4 or dorso-latero-ventro-basal.

TABLE 1.—AGE RANGE AND INCIDENCE OF PENILE HAIR PATTERNS OF RIGHT SIDE OF 320 WHITES

Penile hair patterns	Age range (inclusive years)	Incidence (number of subjects)
Class 1	15-87	187
Class 2	20-83	101
Class 3	18-76	20
Class 4	18-82	12

2. *Class 2 or ventro-basal.* This pattern is the same as the basal, except additional hair occurs on the ventral side of the penis. The ventral component extends distally about one-half the length of the penis or farther; the proximal end of the ventral component is continuous or not continuous with the basal component. The hairs of the ventral component are often small and sparse; in some cases, reduced to only one or two hairs.

3. *Class 3 or latero-ventro-basal.* This pattern is the same as the ventro-basal, except additional hair occurs on the lateral side of the penis dorso-medially to the distal end of the ventral component. The lateral component is continuous with the ventral component. The hairs of the lateral component are often small and sparse. In some cases, the lateral component is continuous dorso-medially for the full length of the ventral component.

4. *Class 4 or dorso-latero-ventro-basal.* This pattern is the same as the latero-ventro-basal, except additional hair occurs on the dorsal surface of the penis. The dorsal component is dorso-medially to the distal end of the lateral component; it is continuous with the lateral component; and it connects the lateral component of the right side with that of the left, thus making a narrow arch of hair over the dorsal surface of the penis (arch of penile hair, the distinguishing feature of the dorso-latero-ventro-basal pattern).

TABLE 3.—CORRELATION OF PENILE HAIR PATTERNS OF RIGHT SIDE AND ABDOMINAL HAIR PATTERNS OF RIGHT SIDE OF 320 WHITES

Penile hair patterns	Abdominal hair patterns		
	Quadrangular	Acuminate	Other types
Class 1	51	131	5
Class 2	25	76	—
Class 3	10	10	—
Class 4	1	11	—

TABLE 2.—AGE RANGE AND INCIDENCE OF PENILE HAIR PATTERNS OF RIGHT SIDE OF 320 AMERICAN NEGROES

Penile hair patterns	Age range (inclusive years)	Incidence (number of subjects)
Class 1	16-75	132
Class 2	15-76	149
Class 3	20-70	17
Class 4	17-68	22

The hairs of the dorsal and lateral components are often small and sparse. The basal component extends farther distally than it does in the other patterns. In some cases, the ventral component extends farther distally than the lateral and dorsal components.

In one subject the proximal two-thirds of the penis was encircled with a continuous band of hair. No additional hairs could be found on any other part of the penis. This case is a dorso-latero-ventro-basal in which the arch of penile hair is so extensive as to permit no bare area to exist on the dorso-lateral surface between the arch and the basal component. It is especially interesting in being more primitive (less degenerate) than the variety of dorso-latero-ventro-basal shown in Fig. 1D.

OTHER DATA

Tables 1 and 2 show a wide age range for all of the penile hair patterns in both whites and Negroes. The same tables show that Classes 1 and 2 have the greatest incidence for both groups of subjects.

Tables 3 and 4 show that Classes 1 and 2 have high correlation with acuminate abdominal hair pattern in both whites and Negroes.

Some asymmetry in penile hair patterns was found to occur. Table 5 shows that 53 of the

TABLE 4.—CORRELATION OF PENILE HAIR PATTERNS OF RIGHT SIDE AND ABDOMINAL HAIR PATTERNS OF RIGHT SIDE OF 320 AMERICAN NEGROES

Penile hair patterns	Abdominal hair patterns		
	Quadrangular	Acuminate	Other types
Class 1	9	120	3
Class 2	28	121	—
Class 3	5	12	—
Class 4	2	20	—

TABLE 5.—INCIDENCE OF ASYMMETRICAL PENILE HAIR PATTERNS OF 320 WHITES AND 320 AMERICAN NEGROES

<i>Asymmetrical penile hair-patterns</i>	<i>Incidence (Number of subjects)</i>	
	<i>Whites</i>	<i>Negroes</i>
Basal on one side and ventro-basal on other side	28	39
Ventro-basal on one side and latero-ventro-basal on other side	7	6
Latero-ventro-basal on one side and dorso-latero-ventro-basal on other side	3	2
Basal with greater distal extent on one side than that on other side	9	4
Ventro-basal with greater distal extent on one side than that on other side	6	8
<i>Total</i>	<u>53</u>	<u>59</u>

320 whites have asymmetry and that 59 of the 320 Negroes have it. Table 5 also shows that in most cases the asymmetry is due to the presence of one pattern on one side of the penis and a different pattern on the other.

SUMMARY

1. Four penile hair patterns occur. These are Class 1 or basal, Class 2 or ventro-basal, Class 3 or latero-ventro-basal, and Class 4 or dorso-latero-ventro-basal.
2. All of the penile hair patterns have a wide age range.
3. Classes 1 and 2 show high correlation with the acuminate abdominal hair pattern.
4. Classes 1 and 2 have the greatest incidence.
5. Asymmetry in penile pilosity is of fairly common occurrence (over 15 per cent).

6. All findings concerning penile hair patterns in the whites are essentially the same in the American Negroes.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many people helped to make this study possible. Dr. W. Montague Cobb, professor and head of the Department of Anatomy, Howard University College of Medicine, gave encouragement and guidance. Mr. Alvin Bryant, a student of Howard University College of Medicine, assisted most efficiently in the examination of each subject. And the following staff at St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Washington, D.C., cooperated to the fullest: Dr. Dale C. Cameron, superintendent; Dr. Francis N. Waldrop, director, Behavioral and Clinical Studies Research Center; members of the Research Committee; physicians; supervisors; nurses; attendants; and male patients.

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74th Annual NMA Convention
San Francisco, Calif.
August 10-14, 1969